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16 August 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Vance on the NRO

1. I delivered the NRO agreement executed by the DCI and his covering letter to Mr. Vance at 1100 hours this morning. We briefly reviewed the arguments pro and con for having the DNRO a member of the Executive Committee and the reasons behind the proposed additional language to be added to paragraph D.1.d. I explained the new organizational arrangements proposed for CIA which I said were still in a tentative stage but would result in establishment of an Assistant to the DD/S&T in CIA to be responsible directly to the DCI for all reconnaissance matters. This arrangement, I said, would parallel the arrangement in the Pentagon under which the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force would report directly to the Deputy Secretary of Defense on reconnaissance matters.

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2. I told Mr. Vance that as soon as the agreement is signed consideration should be given to two matters of considerable urgency. One is the funding of further research and exploratory development in connection with the new general search system. The second is to develop the basis for a decision on whether or not to go ahead with [redacted] I explained to Mr. Vance the present situation and CIA's preference for the [redacted] contract as opposed to [redacted] I said that I presumed that the Executive Committee would probably want to impanel some experts or else charge the Land Panel with the objective of developing recommendations as to whether or not to go ahead [redacted] I also said that if the decision is made to go ahead, I felt that there were very strong reasons for allocating the developmental responsibility to the Agency.

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3. Mr. Vance wanted Dr. Brown's views on the contract before final approval. Dr. Brown was inclined to insist that the DNRO should be a member of the Executive Committee. I said that I thought that the agreement was probably already somewhat overbalanced in the direction of control by the Secretary of Defense. Mr. Vance finally intervened to say that he would concede the point.

4. Dr. Brown then questioned the meaning of the additional sentence proposed for inclusion in paragraph D.1.d. He was prepared to concede that intelligence objectives must determine the design of all systems. He was also prepared to concede that where it is proposed to accommodate equipment serving non-intelligence purposes in a capsule along with sensors for intelligence-gathering purposes, the intelligence-gathering sensors must be accommodated at the expense of any other equipment. Finally he was prepared to concede that the spacecraft and reentry vehicles should not be used to constrain the development of a sensor. In this connection, moreover, he conceded that it clearly would not be the policy of the Executive Committee to subordinate the design of a sensor to accommodate the conformation of a capsule simply because of standardization considerations. I repeated the Director's analogy of the man and the suit and the necessity of having the suit made to fit the man, rather than vice versa. I gave two specific illustrations of situations which worried us. One is the SAMOS program in which a capsule had been developed ostensibly for intelligence purposes using a capsule which was actually designed to contain a man. A second illustration is the existing general search situation. We would not want to have the Perkin-Elmer system rejected simply because it turns out that the Air Force has invested heavily in a spacecraft which does not accommodate the PE camera. Dr. Brown agreed that sunk costs should not be a factor in this decision. Mr. Vance tended to agree at first that the language of the agreement must be overly restrictive, indicating that general consideration of cost effectiveness might make it impossible in all circumstances to subordinate the design of spacecraft completely to the requirements of a sensor. On the other hand, he also recognized that by leaving the Air Force in control of the development of spacecraft, CIA was making a very substantial concession.

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Finally, at my suggestion, he agreed to leave the provision as it is but include some interpretive language in a covering letter which he then proceeded to dictate signifying his acquiescence to the agreement and his intention to ensure cooperation on the part of the Defense Department.

5. I told Mr. Vance that the DCI felt that the agreement, once executed, should be confirmed by the White House on behalf of the President and said that I would suggest to the Director that he and Mr. Vance present it to McGeorge Bundy after a 303 Committee meeting. Mr. Vance said that he was sure that Mr. Bundy would concur in any proposals which reflected joint agreement by Admiral Raborn and himself.

6. Dr. Brown started to raise another objection which he attributed to Dr. Fubini. At this point, however, the Secretary of Defense came in and Mr. Vance said that he had accepted the agreement in its present form. He showed the Secretary the letter which he was proposing to send to the DCI and Mr. McNamara indicated his approval.

[s] John A. Bross
JOHN A. BROSS
D/DCI/NIPE

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